

#AllotmentGames

'Allotment Games' is a self-published tile-based game, using the rules of the popular game Carcassonne, which combines open illustration and urban farming/gardening issues, with participatory art methods.

In 2009, a Finnish-Scottish-Polish artist-illustrator collective (Wojtek Mejor, Natalia Kulka, Andrew Gryf Paterson, Lotta Kauppi and Simo Haanpää) designed and illustrated two different sets of tiles, where instead of medieval walled cities, fields and monasteries gained points, as typical with Carcassonne, these visual features were replaced by images of allotment garden plots, (sub)urban streets, and community markets.

#QHD_FEED

'Carcassonne' board-game was originally designed by Klaus-Jürgen Wrede and published in 2000 by Hans im Glück in German, by Rio Grande Games (until 2012) & Z-Man Games (currently) in English. It received the Spiel des Jahres and the Deutscher Spiele Preis awards in 2001.

The game, both Carcassonne, and this Allotment Games, is based on two core 'game mechanics' (ref: www.boardgamegeek.com):

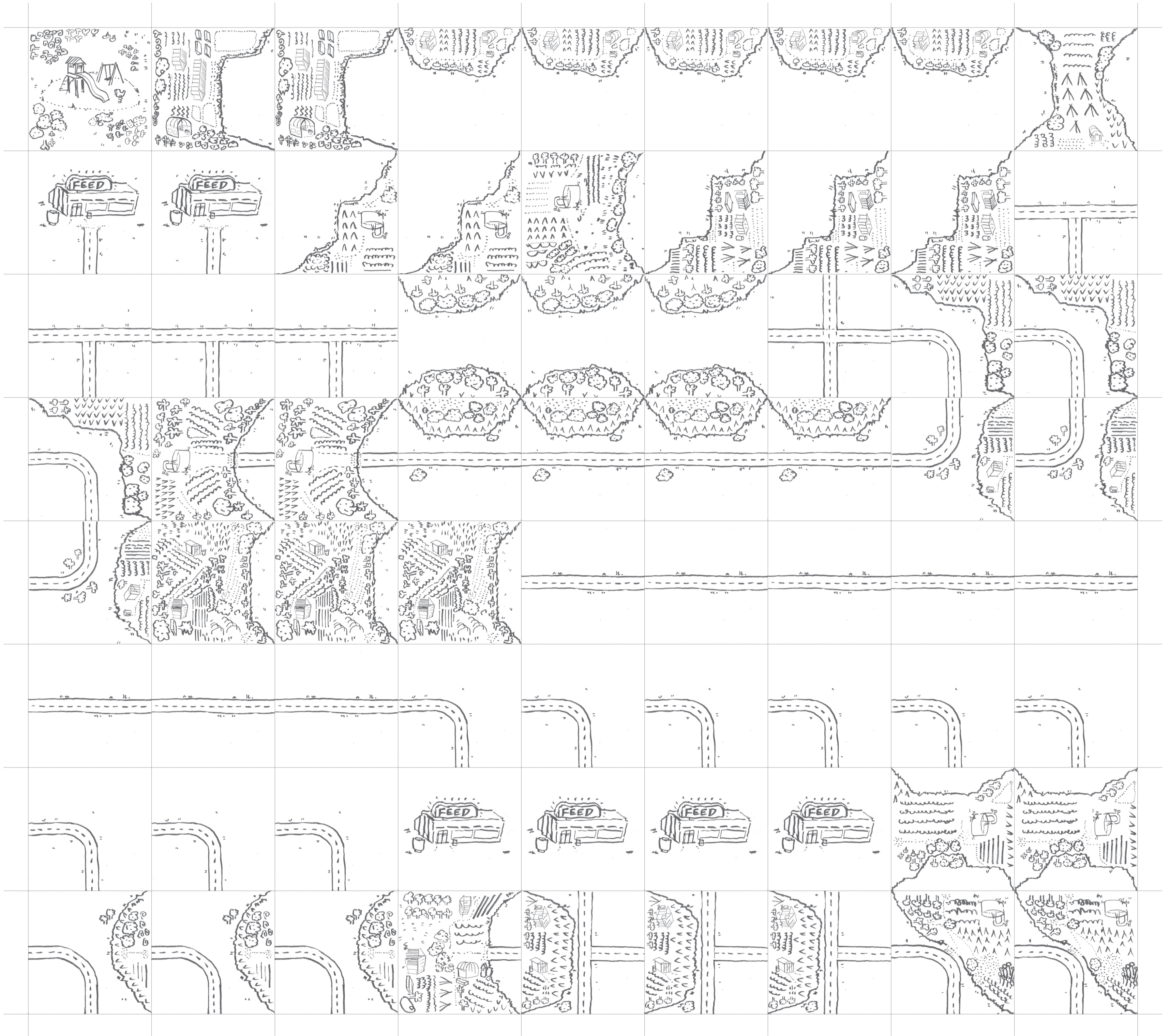
* Area Control, which typically awards control of an area to the player that has the majority of units or influence in that area.

* Tile placement, which implies playing a tile in a strategic location, respecting rules to expand the playing area or score points.

Making new tiles for Allotment Games involved 'skinning' the game mechanics, 'modding' (modifying) the visual rhetoric towards a focus on representing allotments and their urban surroundings. Although the rules of the game don't change from the original, what the game-players are competing over to gain 'area control' is not medieval castles, but valuable growing land for growing food.

In the current or imagined near-future, with a rise in food costs, socio-economic stress, and issues of food security - but also an increased interest in open, commons-oriented collaboration & cooperation - means that having a small piece of land to grow food, herbs, flowers; to relax, eat, play & socialise is topical. Should you compete or co-operate?

We encourage you with this gifted tile-set to share & discuss these ambitions around a gamers' table. Enjoy!



Illustrated tile-set above by Andrew Gryf Paterson (2017)
(adaption of Natalia Kulka's earlier 'Siirtolapuutarhapelit' tile-set, 2009)

These new tiles continue to use Kulka's water-tap and children's playground icons in the graphic illustrations of the allotment areas.

In addition to this new tile-set by Paterson, Wojtek Mejor will lead a 'Allotment Games' participatory workshop in July 2017 for local residents and families, creating new versions of 'Allotment Games' for others to play based on local interests.

These new works are commissioned in negotiation with Dominic Smith, curator of the Queens Hall Digital programme, for the occasion of 'FEED' exhibition, that takes place from Saturday 8 July - Saturday 26 August, at Queens Hall Arts Centre in Hexham, NE England, UK.

For more information: www.queenshalldigital.com | www.queenshall.co.uk

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Artist biographies

Andrew Gryf Paterson (SCO/PI) is an 'artist-organiser', cultural producer, educator and independent researcher. Specialises in developing and leading inter-and trans-disciplinary projects exploring connections between art, digital culture and science, cultural activism, ecological and sustainability movements, cultural heritage and collaborative networks. <http://agryfp.info>

Wojtek Mejor (PL) is a cultural producer, educator, organizer and activist living in Warsaw. Involved in the cooperative movement, food activism, art workshops, disseminating degrowth theory and community supported agriculture. Member of Dobrze Food Coop, GROWL Degrowth Network, Warsaw Degrowth Group.

Wojtek and Andrew are friends since the early Pixelache Helsinki Festival years (2003-) and have been involved together in various related processes. Specifically with a DIWO (Do-it-with-others) style, they have collaborated in the 'Allotment Games' (aka Siirtolapuutarhapelit, 2009) project; within different stages of the 'Herbologies/ Foraging Networks' programme in Finland, Latvia and Poland (2010-2011); shared time and experiences at the 'Coop Camp Tampere: Food-related cooperation' event in 2012; and most recently 'Bacterial Love Letters' (2015) in Lithuania.

How to set up and play?

If you are familiar with Carcassonne already, you know how to play the game. It will be easy for you to you start, but note the differences below. Newcomers to the original game, look for Carcassonne instructions online. We recommend this video: <https://youtu.be/kakQvPIKyPY>

NB: Walled-cities are now allotment gardens; Fields are now empty urban areas - you can fill the gaps; Cathedrals are now 'FEED' halls; Heraldic-shields for extra points are now water-taps.

Carefully cut out the tile-set (This B1 sheet contains a duplicate set of tiles you can also use, or give to a friend). It is recommended you glue or spray-mount them onto card to make them more durable.

You will need different coloured counters for each player: 7 per person (or double if you use both tile-sets). In board-game culture, these are called 'meeples'. You can search online about where to get these from your local board-game shop, or online stockist. You can also make your own from air-hardening coloured moulding clay, or cut out some from card and make some distinctions between the different sets.

You will also need a piece of paper and pen to keep a score-card as you play.

